

# Reclusive Sly Stone surprises at Grammys

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Sly Stone, the J.D. Salinger of funk, was drawn out of seclusion by a Grammys tribute.

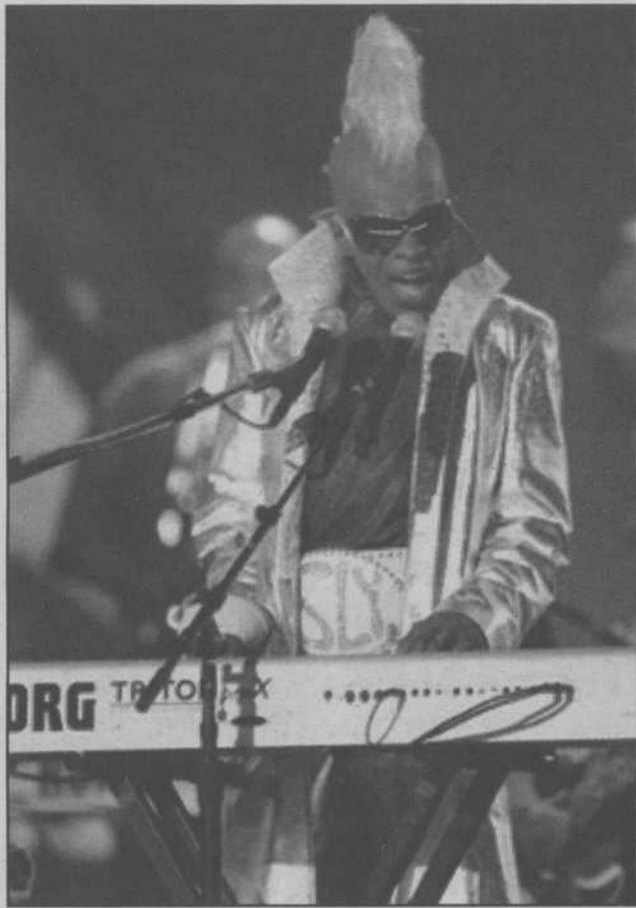
Wednesday night in Los Angeles, the reclusive pioneer of a hugely influential soul-rock-funk fusion made his first major public appearance since Jan. 12, 1993, when he was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Sporting a giant blond Mohawk, dark shades and a silver, purple-lined robe, Stone took the stage after a five-song medley tribute that included John Legend, Joss Stone, Maroon 5, Will.i.am from The Black Eyed Peas and Steven Tyler of Aerosmith.

Stone played "I Want to Take You Higher" behind a set of keyboards with his old band, the Family Stone, appearing uncertain and unaccustomed to the bright lights of the big event. He kept his head bowed, declining to address the audience or acknowledge the occasion.

He departed after just a few verses, leaving befuddlement in his wake. Perhaps Dave Chappelle, who introduced Stone, had an inkling of the task facing the legend.

"The only thing harder than leaving show business is coming back," said



Sly Stone from the Sly and the Family Stone performs at the 48th Grammy Awards on Wednesday in Los Angeles.

Chappelle, who famously abandoned his hit Comedy Central show.

Though the Sly and the Family Stone tribute had been planned for weeks, Stone's presence had been a giant question mark in the days leading up to the show. Even Grammy producers — speaking hopefully but cautiously in the days before the

Grammys — seemed uncertain he would be there.

The 61-year-old Stone, whose real name is Sylvester Stewart, hadn't performed live since 1987. He did, however, make a cameo appearance last year at a concert with his sister, Vaetta, who plays in a Family Stone tribute band. He has reportedly renamed Vaetta's band "The

Family Stone," and is writing and producing for them.

But in the late '60s and early '70s, Stone was ubiquitous, an icon of the Woodstock era.

His performance with the Family Stone on the second day of that fabled festival was one of its most acclaimed.

Stone's band began in 1967 with its debut, "Whole New Thing." It then delved deeper into exuberant funk on the album "Dance to the Music," which featured the title track. Its third album, "Life," followed just months later.

But the band's 1969 release, "Stand!" was its masterpiece. Songs like "I Want to Take You Higher," "Everyday People" and "Stand!"

were instant classics that re-wrote pop music, mixing Motown with pop melodies and '60s hopefulness.

By 1971, Stone had grown more disenchanted, releasing "There's a Riot Goin' On." 1973's "Fresh" continued that trend, but still had funk gems like "If You Want Me to Stay."

By '75, the Family Stone was no more, breaking up largely because of Stone's increasing drug problems, which led to canceled concerts.

Stone would later release several solo albums of little note and poor sales.

He was arrested several times in the '80s for cocaine possession.

He collaborated with Funkadelic in 1981, but in-

creasingly shunned the spotlight — though the spotlight also shied away from Stone.

His brother Freddie told *Spin* magazine in the early '80s that Stone "didn't want to be out in front anymore. The glamour didn't mean anything anymore. He wanted to be normal."

As the years went by, Stone's absence from the public eye became a thing of legend, leading to a documentary, currently in the works, titled, "On the Sly: In Search of the Family Stone."

His appearance Wednesday, bizarre as it was, was still defended by some — including Adam Levine of Maroon 5.

"Can you really argue with an unbelievable looking mohawk and a silver jacket?"

## R. Kelly

(Continued from Page 9)

tasia.

R&B-soul album, male: "Soulife," Anthony Hamilton; "TP.3 Reloaded," R. Kelly; "Get Lifted," John Legend; "Charlie, Last Name Wilson," Charlie Wilson.

R&B-soul album, group, band or duo: "Pleasure & Pain," 112; "Monkey Business," Black Eyed Peas; "Illumination," Earth, Wind & Fire; "Livin' the Luxury Brown," Mint Condition.

R&B-soul or rap new artist: "Run It," Chris Brown; "Music," Leela James; "Must Be Nice," Lyfe Jennings; "Slow Down," Bobby Valentino.

R&B-soul or rap music video: "Testify," Common; "Lose Control," Missy Elliott featuring Ciara and Fat Man Scoop; "Trapped in the Closet (Chapter 1 of 5)," R. Kelly; "Gold Digger," Kanye West featuring Jamie Foxx.

R&B-soul or rap dance cut: "My Humps," Black Eyed Peas; "Lose Control," Missy Elliott featuring Ciara and Fat Man Scoop; "Hollaback Girl," Gwen Stefani; "Gold Digger," Kanye West.

Gospel album: "One Church," Kurt Carr Project; "Hero," Kirk Franklin; "Psalms, Hymns & Spiritual Songs," Donnie McClurkin; "Purified," CeCe Winans.

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